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### **Impact of damming Missouri River to be discussed at Cultural Heritage Center**

PIERRE, S.D. -- The opportunity to have a private tour with an expert on the impact of damming the Missouri River will be possible during a special event in Pierre.

Author Michael Lawson will be in Pierre on Sunday, Sept. 30, to discuss his book *Dammed Indians Revisited*. A free discussion and book signing will begin at 1 p.m. CST at the Cultural Heritage Center and last about one hour.

Lawson will continue to lead the discussion during a two-hour cruise on the Missouri River. The cruise will take place aboard the Capital City Queen, with the excursion boat leaving from the Oahe Marina below the Oahe Dam at 2:30 p.m. The excursion costs \$10 per person, and reservations can be made by calling (605) 773-6346.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet with the author for a discussion on the river he wrote about," said Nancy Tystad Koupal, director of the South Dakota State Historical Society Press, which published the book.

The SDSHS Press and the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation, the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society, are co-sponsoring the event.

*Dammed Indians Revisited*, published by the SDSHS Press, studies the impact flooding caused by the Missouri River dams had on American Indians who lived along the river. The Pick-Sloan Plan was approved by Congress in 1944 to control the Missouri River. The highlight of the plan was the construction of five large dams along the upper Missouri River (Garrison, Oahe, Big Bend, Fort Randall and Gavins Point), along with improvements to the previously constructed Fort Peck Dam in Montana.

"The construction of the Pick-Sloan dams was an amazing engineering feat that provided many important benefits," Lawson said. "However, it is now obvious that its planners and developers paid too little attention to the human and environmental impacts of their projects. As a result, the task of balancing the benefits and managing the negative consequences of the Missouri River dam system becomes more complex and challenging with each passing year."

Lawson said he would encourage people to attend the discussions at the Cultural Heritage Center and on the Capital City Queen so that they might learn more about how and where the Oahe Dam fits into the context of the overall Pick-Sloan Plan and its impact on the reservations.

“Oahe is the largest dam built under the plan and it caused more damage to Native American communities, lands and resources than any other public works project in the United States,” Lawson said. “They should also come for the opportunity to ask me questions and to share information or perspectives that might help me learn more about these topics.”

Lawson is a partner with Morgan, Angel & Associates in Washington, D.C., a firm which specializes in historical and public policy research.

*Dammed Indians Revisited* is a revised and updated version of Lawson’s 1982 book, *Dammed Indians: The Pick-Sloan Plan and the Missouri River Sioux, 1944-1980*.

Lawson based the 1982 book on official records of federal agencies, records and publications at state historical societies, newspaper articles, and interviews with tribal leaders, tribal members and government officials. *Dammed Indians Revisited* was published in 2010, containing six new chapters and revising some of the original text.

*Dammed Indians Revisited* was selected by the South Dakota Humanities Council as the 2012 One Book South Dakota. The program encourages everyone in South Dakota to read and discuss the same title. Lawson will be in South Dakota to speak at the South Dakota Festival of Books in Sioux Falls on Friday evening, Sept. 28, and on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 29, before coming to Pierre.

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*The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation is a private charitable nonprofit that seeks funding to assist the South Dakota State Historical Society in programming and projects to preserve South Dakota’s history and heritage for future generations.*

*The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council, and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. The State Historical Society is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society’s world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit [www.history.sd.gov](http://www.history.sd.gov) for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.*